/292 cont./

Mourning

765 The interment over, they cry all that day, until the sun sets and night comes; then everyone goes home, only the closest [785] [302] relatives staying to weep. Fasting, already mentioned, lasts for three days, and on the first day after the burial all the women relatives cut off their hair and lay it on the grave. While cutting it off they look toward the east. The hair stays on the grave for some time, and later they take it off, and, if they burn it, it is [826] not on the grave, but away. They prefer not to burn it, however, because they would feel heat /293/ on their heads. If they notice or sense some noise coming from the hole, they heat a stone, put it on top, and the noise stops (1).

766 765 1. If the deceased is a cacique, they all weep until dawn, and afterward they meet every night for about a week.

765 They also put on the grave the tembeta, the bag, and the weapons which belonged to the deceased, such as his lance or some kind of saber, bows and arrows, so that he will not go looking for them, and when for any reason they leave the house alone, they put over the hole the pestle of the mortar, and, if this is done, the deceased will not move from his place. The souls of [775] those who have died in a bad way, for example, suicides, walk about continually, find no rest, go shouting at set hours, and are, according to what they believe, demons or their companions.

The dead person's nearest relatives sincerely grieve over the disappearance of the deceased, as the tears and sorrow shown on their faces prove. If, instead of a man, it is a woman who disappears from among the living, the widower feels the same grief; if the dead woman leaves small children, the picture that the house presents is truly heart-rending, the house where the morning sun will not find present the mother who so tenderly cared for her little ones (2).

2. The children demand to go back and they

/218 cont./

766 754 825 If a Chiriguano is killed by a jaguar, he is /219/ buried with his head downward, so that he will not go about as such an animal. This notion of a jaguar who was a human being is widespread, especially among the Quichua /Quechua/, where this

764 415

Fig. 113. Chiriguano grave.
Caipipendi.

766 754 825 strange animal, as has been mentioned, is called uturunco (cf. p. 12 /untranslated/). If a fox howls at night near the village, someone will die.

763 823

The bodies of those who have been executed for repeated murder are flung out on the ground or else burned.

Some Indians, among them the Chirionoses (1) who live on

1. Tribes of the Chiriguano type. (Ed.)

the Bolivian or Brazilian frontiers, bury their dead in the trunks of trees. To this end they go into the thickest parts of the forest, choose out a yuchan tree, which has a bottle shaped trunk and is as soft as cork, fell it and place the corpse inside it, covering it over well to keep the crows from getting at it. When the Fort Sarmiento road was opened up a short time ago one of these burial trees was found, quite by chance.

The Matacos make a practice of burying their dead under ground, although some tribes, those towards the east who live close to the Tobas, burn them. This practice, one would suppose, is one which they have in common with the Tobas.

It is to be supposed that the beliefs held by the Matacos in this matter of interment are also held by the other wild Indians with whom they are continually in fighting contact, either as allies or as enemies, and with whom they share the same spirit cult.

Now the Matacos, as has been said, believe that the soul of the dead has no rest until the body has been buried within tribal territory. I have no reason to believe that an exception is made for those who die in battle. They believe also that the soul, which they call "hésék" (they give the name of "tzan" to the body, and "hót" to a corpse) does not descend into the earth to be with its companions until the body has decomposed, either by rot or by fire. They say that until this happens the soul wanders about around the family hut, sometimes becoming visible and complaining about its lot.

This business of the appearance of souls (or ghosts) and their cries of lamentation is the subject of a great deal of foolish old wives' tales among them, almost to the point of their not talking about anything else, and I would wager that it is the cause of as much fright among them as it is amongst us.